TERRORISM 101:
FUNDAMENTAL INFORMATION FOR THE CITIZEN VOLUNTEER

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GENERAL

The American public is besieged with the uncertainty of terrorism and the next terrorist attack. Is the reason economic, social, political, religious, or is there no reason at all for it? Steven Deitz, American playwright and dramatist suggests that "*A people who's primary aims are driving, shopping, and television are subject to terrorism at any time.*" [1] Unfortunately, whatever the reason, there are global Salafist extremists who have already attacked America and are regularly threatening to continue their acts of terror. What's to be done, what's to be done?!?

Fortunately, the American public has an option for combating all forms of terrorism. It begins with learning about and understanding the terrorists' mode of organization, their motivation, where they congregate and recruit, and how they select their targets. Once equipped with this understanding, the citizen volunteer must learn how to observe and recognize possible terrorist activities and to differentiate between innocent members of the community and the truly potential terrorist activity. Finally, the citizen volunteer must know who to contact with this information and how to present that information (also known as intelligence) in a way that the proper authorities can make use of that intelligence.

INTRODUCTION TO TERRORISM

Imagine three males of seemingly Mid-Eastern descent seen driving around locally in a late model van, stopping periodically for no apparent reason, or walking in the local mall or sporting event acting suspiciously. What to do? What should be done?

These, and many other questions, have been asked by average citizens and students during lectures on terrorism, and its continued and ever increasing presence here in the United States. As local and state law enforcement agencies begin to train on identifying, preventing and reacting to the militant Islamic extremists, it is becoming more apparent that this newest threat to our homeland will require a tremendous amount of assistance from the average citizen. This much needed support from the citizens of the various communities can only come as a result of education in the identification phase of our homeland security measures.

Defining Terrorism

As this newest threat continues to penetrate our porous borders and the terrorist leaders assimilate themselves within the general public of our society, it becomes necessary to find a working definition of terrorism to have and use as an effective tool. It is this elusive definition that has had a direct and debilitating impact on the struggle to identify and defeat terrorist attacks thus far. At every level of

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[1] Deitz, S. Retrieved from
http://thinkexist.com/quotation/a-people-who-s-primary-aims-are-driving-shopping/763065.html .

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government, there are multiple definitions for the act of terrorism leading to considerable confusion. Instead, it is possible to identify this new enemy through the application of terroristic-guerilla warfare, which is, "…the deliberate use of violence against a person or persons using guerilla warfare tactics in an effort to achieve political, ideological, or religious goals." [2] With this working definition, it is possible to more readily identify the forms of terrorism facing this country and develop a proposal at the strategic and tactical levels to combat any terroristic operation within the U. S.

Operational Phases of Terroristic-Guerilla Warfare

Now, with a good starting point, it would serve to better understand a theoretical approach as to how terrorist cells penetrate a particular community and patiently plan and execute their future attacks. Terrorist cells within the U.S. operate under the following seven phases in preparation of executing their terroristic-guerilla warfare tactics (Note: All seven phases might not be used all the time and some of them might occur out of the order presented in this article.): [3]

> **Preparation** – Terrorist groups look for a location from which to base their operations and begin recruiting. Community selection and socioeconomic structure are two critical factors in their choice of location. The socioeconomic structure of a community is crucial to a cell's intelligence preparation in a given area of operation. Understanding the sociological elements of a given city, along with its economical structure, is critical for terrorists attempting to exploit and undermine a social system while recruiting for their cause. People from every level of the social strata, from the educated to the unschooled and from the social elite to the criminal derelicts are potentially subject to the recruitment techniques of these local cells. Location is critical as they require an environment conducive to recruiting as well as privacy for planning their attacks.

> **Initial Contact** – Over time, the organizational structure begins to take shape and positions within the cell are filled with recruits from the local community. In order to recruit locals to meet their specific needs, cell members set clandestine operations in motion to begin identifying those who meet the special needs within a particular cell. While looking for those individuals who might meet their strategic and tactical needs for future terrorist operations, cell members integrate themselves into the daily lives of their target population with absolute discretion, giving the appearance of the average U.S. citizen residing in "Anytown, USA." Once they have comfortably maneuvered themselves into the everyday events of their chosen community, then, and only then, will they begin their initial contact.

> **Infiltration** – Infiltration is defined as complete submersion into a society. A critical factor for the development of the cell's structure in this stage is the process of isolating promising recruits in U.S. society who may harbor ill feelings toward either the current government or Christians and Jews. They begin to quietly spread their religious and political ideologies as a more

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[2] Hughbank, Richard J. & Hughbank, Robert D. (Sep/Oct 2007). "Terrorism: What Is It? Are We Prepared?" *American Cop Magazine*, September/October, 2007, p. 49.

[3] The seven phases were extracted from: Hughbank, Richard J. Chapter entitled "Guerilla Warfare and Law Enforcement: Combating the 21st Century Terrorist Cell within the United States," in *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century [Three Volumes]: International Perspectives*, June 2007, pp. 235-252. *Praeger Security International,* West Port, Connecticut.

acceptable alternative to the democratic governments in the evil empire of the Western world. Militant Islamic terrorist cells are building mosques and other infrastructures designed to quietly train U.S.-born Muslims and others throughout the U.S. to engage in a continuing jihad (holy war) against the U.S. way of life in order to impose a worldwide Islamic rule.

Organization –   Once the infiltration phase has been positively established in an area of operations deemed satisfactory to the needs of the newly formed insurgent group, the terrorist cell's organization begins to take shape. With decentralized cells working toward a common objective, those caught during the commission of an illegal act are unable to give any operational intelligence on other sections of their cell or on the existence of other cells. A terrorist cell evolves in both size and sophistication as new recruits enter their training and progress to any of the cell's three organizational forces: auxiliary, intelligence and operational. A cell's organizational structure can vary from this suggested configuration but will have similar characteristics, regardless of the structural framework.

Buildup – Although the name of this phase implies there is a massing or increase in size of the cell, the size will vary with each location (and sociological environment), organization and intended mission. Twenty-first century terrorist cells located within the U.S. are organized in small and illusive elements more suitable to meet their needs for conducting covert operations at every phase of their insurgency. Furthermore, recruits with special skills are also scrutinized more heavily when considered for recruitment, unlike the average guerrilla fighter in previous wars. Understanding this philosophy is critical for law enforcement agencies throughout the country that must identify and disrupt terrorist cells within their jurisdictions. On the basis of its beliefs, leadership, teachings, training, and geographical and social conditions, each organization will adapt to its natural surroundings and begin to take its own shape over time.

Combat Employment   –   Once a cell has determined that it is time to conduct combat operations, plans will become actions set into motion with finite precision, leaving little room for identification or interception by first responders. The asymmetric actions of typical guerilla warfare are a product of months of detailed planning, resourcing, organizing and rehearsing. Once this phase has begun, law enforcement agencies and other first responders enter a mode of emergency management, while the perpetrators - if not killed in the attack themselves - take measures to avoid capture or any lasting damage to the remaining terror network members.

Demobilization – Demobilization during guerrilla warfare is more likely to occur in the form of a dismembering of the operational cell responsible for the actual terrorist attacks -that is, if the members do not die for their cause (e.g., homicide bombings) or are caught during the commission of their criminal act. It could also be concluded that the parent cell itself could stand down and relocate to another area or region if the situation proved dangerous to its existence and execution of Usama bin Laden's second fatwa. The organization's decentralized operational control allows the separate cells to function independently, providing uninterrupted and continuous operations. To successfully terminate a local cell's operational status, a way must

found to demobilize the actual base facilities (e.g., mosques, school and training camps) where they recruit, train, plan and project terror against their intended targets.[4]

HOW TO IDENTIFY A POTENTIAL TERRORIST

During any of the beginning phases of a terrorist operation, there is a chance one or more of their cell members can be identified and apprehended as they move about freely. Most citizens might be convinced that a definitive profile would prove the easiest way to find and identify a terrorist, but a qualitative profile (e.g., male, of Muslim descent, between 21-40 years of age) is all but impossible to offer up to the general public without the fear of causing undo problems with those innocents living in the Muslim-American communities. While this type of profiling has worked in the past with serial rapists and killers, hostage takers and potential suicide victims, it is not advisable to rely on the same identifying factors for terrorists; thus, it is possible to profile terrorists and their organizations with quantitative data. Such numeric data does not necessarily provide law enforcement and other first responder agencies with enough information to definitively identify a potential attacker.

Another concern in offering the general public a profile of a potential terrorist directly relates back to the "Red Scare" of the McCarthy era from 1950-1954. The thought that neighbors and fellow workers fall within the general profile of a terrorist is exactly what must be avoided. What should be determined is suspicious activity, things that look out of the ordinary from everyday occurrences. Situational awareness of the neighborhoods and new individuals seen around businesses and housing areas are a couple of examples of how the citizen volunteer could potentially identify terrorists living among the citizenry and studying their cultural and daily habits. By this time, the profile may sound exactly like the characteristics of a stalker, a rapist, or a serial murderer. The point is that while all criminals are not terrorists, all terrorists are in fact criminals and will display the very same discriminative qualities to the average citizen.

PROTECTING AGAINST BECOMING A VICTIM

On several occasions, the terms antiterrorism and counterterrorism have been used as exchangeable terms, but they are distinctly different. Antiterrorism is defensive and passive in nature and includes physical security measures such a lighting, fencing, alarms and security guards. Counterterrorism, on the other hand, is more offensive and active, almost aggressive. In protecting against becoming a victim, the citizen is enacting antiterrorism measures in his daily life and he should begin with his own domicile.

Simple things such as protecting a home with alarm systems, living in gated communities with contracted security, increasing outdoor lighting at night or fencing in the yard will increase the odds against potential terrorist activity. While traveling away from home, try varying daily routes to work and school. Also consider changing times of travel. Pay attention to the surroundings and take note of anything out of the ordinary. Ensure that a cellular phone is readily available to call first responders if needed.

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[4] Hughbank, Richard J. "Guerilla Warfare and Law Enforcement: Combating the 21st Century Terrorist Cell within the United States," in *Countering Terrorism and Insurgency in the 21st Century [Three Volumes]: International Perspectives*, June 2007, pp. 235-252. *Praeger Security International,* West Port, Connecticut.

THE CITIZEN'S ROLE IN FIGHTING AGAINST TERRORISM

All of these suggestions might appear sophomoric at first glance, but the average citizen is not trained in these fundamental security and observation skills. Notice that everything suggested is preventative. The average citizen can assist local law enforcement agencies to collect intelligence that might prove valuable in a collective effort. Any information gathered and shared could lead to a potential investigation of a local terrorist cell.

That average citizen, while possibly alert to his surroundings, is not trained to prevent a terrorist attack once an overt act has been initiated. It is during the prevention stage where the volunteer citizen can play a critical role in protecting neighborhoods and cities. By acting together, the volunteer citizens can become an impromptu community policing agency in direct support of the local law enforcement agency. In a collaborative effort to protect the infrastructure and citizens of a given community, these volunteers, with the proper training, can become an extension of any local law enforcement agency.

This particular effort directly relates to the ability of citizen leadership to properly train the citizen volunteer in the understanding of terrorism and its mujahiden warriors, and in how to identify, deter and subsequently defeat this national enemy. This training should include areas such as communications, threat identification, weapons proficiency and less than lethal courses of action. To better facilitate this training, police departments should welcome the opportunity to conduct joint operations in conjunction with these citizen volunteers and seek the appropriate state and/or local legislation affording the much needed directives to enable this inevitable blanket of protection.

Therein lies the problem. Unless such legislation is already in effect, the likelihood of being passed is low. What is needed is a recognized group of citizen volunteers already covered by such legislation. The State Defense Force (SDF), a United States Code Title 10 authorized volunteer military unit, which reports to the Governor through the State Adjutant General, meets that criteria.

THE STATE DEFENSE FORCE AS A SOURCE FOR COMBATING TERRORISM

Although the SDF would be an excellent choice for such an assignment, it is highly unlikely at the present time that such an assignment would be approved. There are already many National Guard and the state Emergency Management Agency needs for which the SDF can provide support. Most SDF units do not have sufficient personnel to perform these identified critical missions to permit this new concept of supporting local police departments in community based anti-terrorism activities.

There are some SDF units that do perform homeland defense missions; however, the literature only contains one article that describes the activities and performance of a homeland security mission. This article relates how the South Carolina State Guard's Homeland Defense Brigade determined the need for statewide support for public safety, public health and emergency preparedness. The result of their effort was the development of a database of community volunteers for police chiefs, sheriffs and emergency preparedness agencies across the state.[5]

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[5] Wishart, E. "South Carolina State Guard Homeland Security Activities under an Americorps Grant," *State Defense Force Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2006, pp. 3-8. Retrieved from The SDF Publication Center at http://www.sdfpc.org/sdfjvol3.pdf.

There are, however, examples in the literature of SDF units providing medical and health support.[6, 7, 8, 9] It is based on this history of community support by citizen volunteers that it may be possible to support a community based anti-terrorism program.

Volunteer Citizen Soldiers

Even though it is unlikely at the present time for a SDF unit to undertake an anti-terrorism effort, the demonstrated desire to support and protect the community and its citizens is a resource that should be considered. These citizen soldiers are all proven volunteers and have the discipline that allows them to accept and complete the mission.

State and/or municipal officials should consider forming a group of SDF personnel in their civilian capacity as a part of their local police department within one of the department's divisions, possibly entitled the Volunteer and Community Services. This group can then obtain the necessary training, prepare a community plan for observing and for reporting what may be critical intelligence.

Training the Citizen Volunteer in Anti-Terrorism

Training can come from the military to local police departments and to civilian contractors. While military training has proven the most viable form of preparation in overseas operations, it has had minimal, if any, impact in protecting against terrorism in the U.S. What has been validated thus far are the tactics used by law enforcement agencies. By taking their current techniques to identify and apprehend the average criminal and making the necessary adjustments to apply that template to terrorist operations, local police have identified the necessary steps to prevent the next attack through the use of community policing.[10]

The "X" factor in training to defeat terrorism is the civilian contractor. In the age of the September 12th terrorism expert, multiple agencies have opened for business with the intent of sharing their ideas of what a terrorist threat looks like and how this nation can prevent future attacks. Finding a company that has a thorough understanding of the psychological perspective of an Islamic extremist and the ultimate goals of an attack against innocent civilians is the key to successfully preparing your

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[6] Colgan, R., Davis, K. and Barish, R. A. "Operation Lifeline: Health Care Professionals from Maryland Respond to Hurricane Katrina." *State Defense Force Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2006, pp. 9-12. Retrieved from The SDF Publication Center at http://www.sdfpc.org/sdfjvol2.pdf

[7] Greenstone, J. L. "The Texas Medical Rangers in the Military Response of The Uniformed Medical Reserve Corps To Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita 2005: The New and Tested Role of The Medical Reserve Corps in the United States." *State Defense Force Monograph Series: Medical Support*, Vol. 2, 2006, pp. 27-40. Retrieved from The SDF Publication Center at   http://www.sdfpc.org/sdfmvol2.pdf . Reprinted in the *Joint Center for Operational Analysis Journal*, Vol. 9, Issue 2, June 2007, pp. 56-62.

[8] Benner, B. "The Texas Medical Rangers and Thousands of Patients," *State Defense Force Journal*,   Vol. 2, No. 2, Fall 2006, pp. 23-26. Retrieved from The SDF Publication Center at http://www.sdfpc.org/sdfjvol2.pdf

[9] Nelson, W., Barish, R., Smalkin, F., Doyle, J., and Hershkowitz, M. "Developing Vibrant State Defense Forces: A Successful Medical and Health Service Model." *State Defense Force Monograph Series: Medical Support*, Vol. 2, 2006, pp. 5-26. Retrieved from The SDF Publication Center at http://www.sdfpc.org/sdfmvol2.pdf . Reprinted in the *Joint Center for Operational Analysis Journal*, Vol. 9, Issue 2, June 2007, pp. 42-55.

forces to protect porous U.S. borders. In preparing to successfully defend against terrorism, the following areas should be covered:

- Understanding the methods and mindset of a terrorist
- Identifying Salafi networks in the United States
- How to properly gain and use intelligence
- How Jihadis recruit
- The potential for terrorist organization to work with local gangs
- Tactical responses specific to terrorist situations
- Crisis management operational phases

    – Prevention
    – Response
    – Recovery

Application of the Training

This impromptu group of volunteer citizen soldiers should petition the local or regional police department to establish a Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS) Project in support of the local or regional homeland security effort. The expanded project effort could be referred to as the Volunteers In Police Service for Homeland Security and would be responsible for integrating all volunteer efforts in homeland security within the area. Once established, the police department leadership should enable the following activities, some of which are required under the VIPS grant (suggested activities are adapted from a proposal to the COPS Program)[10, 11]:

- Appoint a police officer who will then register the program with the USA Freedom Corps.

- Identify a law enforcement officer familiar with tactical and strategic planning activities associated with homeland security to be assigned the additional duty of project Coordinator of Law Enforcement Activities. The Coordinator will arrange for a law enforcement response to observed potential threats to homeland security.

- Arrange for two senior project members to attend the mandatory COPS Office VIPS-related training.

- Identify suitable training sources in accordance with the seven (7) areas identified above for the citizen volunteers and appropriate police officers.

- Survey and integrate all volunteer homeland security activities within the police department.

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[10] Hershkowitz, M. "Volunteers in Police Service for Homeland Security: A Concept for Involving Community and Local Law Enforcement," VIPS proposal under the COPS program, August 2004.

[11] For a detailed description and analysis of community policing, see Jose Docobo, "Protecting America's Communities: A Law Enforcement Perspective," in *Homeland Security: Protecting America's Targets*, vol. 2, ed. James Forest (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), pp. 191–221.

● Determine events that may pose a homeland security danger within the local or regional area that can be readily identified and reported by the citizen volunteers.

● Identify and meet with community groups to explain the potential dangers to homeland security that certain events might pose and to solicit volunteers for the VIPS project.

● Develop a 311-style reporting system utilizing a web-site to report observations and a dedicated telephone line.

● Purchase off-the-shelf portable computer hardware, software and a projector to develop and maintain the reporting system, and to enable automated presentations for briefing and training.

● Train other volunteer groups to identify and report suspicious activity.

● Train the VlPS project personnel, including Reserve Officers and volunteers, on how to receive, review and report observed events to the project Coordinator.

● Obtain police department wind breakers and caps, appropriately marked with the letters VIPS in clearly recognizable color, to be worn by the citizen volunteers when assisting law enforcement officers in homeland security activities.

● Make it very clear that VIPS citizen volunteers will not represent themselves as law enforcement officers or carry a sidearm, nor will they commingle with law enforcement officers except when required to do so as part of their Project assignments.

● Develop statistical measures that will enable evaluation of the VIPS project's success.

● Prepare a final report documenting how the COPS funding directly enhanced the volunteer program and its overall benefit to the police department.

● Additional activities that citizen volunteers may undertake in support of the police department's homeland security activities are:

– Establish an advisory council of businessmen, educators, and retired military and public safety leadership to assist in the volunteer effort.

– Identify federal, state, municipal and business groups that provide security efforts within the county for possible volunteers.

– Inventory of all bridges, tunnels, highways, hospitals and public buildings within the local or regional police department's area of responsibility that could be damaged by terrorist action.

– Outline an in-depth, integrated information technology approach addressing intelligence, data search, cross-referencing and analysis of information, and recommend computer, system programming and data entry.

The success of the citizen volunteer project is dependant on four critical actions:

- Establishing an operational milieu between the citizen volunteers and the police department project coordinator to ensure that designated events and reported observations are meaningful and will be pursued by police officers.

- Identifying and recruiting community volunteer groups who appreciate the danger to the community from terrorists and who are willing to observe and report events that have been identified as critical to homeland security. They may include Explorer Scouts, secondary school Junior ROTC units, Civil Air Patrol, retired military and police groups, businessmen, community organizations, educators, and Neighborhood Watch groups.

- Developing and conducting meaningful training for the identified volunteer groups.

- Preparing a reporting system that properly collects and coordinates citizen volunteer observations, and reports the information to the project coordinator in a usable form.

The police department must commit itself to implement the VlPS project in such a manner that these four critical actions will be fully and faithfully implemented as the damage that may occur from a failed program is totally and unequivocally unacceptable.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As the movement of global Salafist jihadi terrorism continues to emanate inside the United States and other Western countries, citizen volunteers must continue to educate and protect themselves to assist federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies identify and prevent against other attacks. While the citizen volunteers are not going to prevent all future terrorist attacks, they can strive to harden their particular homes, buildings, and cities to the extent that future terrorist cells are forced to move on to other, softer targets. The only question left to ponder is whether the community has chosen to become the tiger or remain the sheep?

Consider once again, for the moment, the SDF as the penultimate uniformed citizen volunteer. If the SDF unit's Commanding General might consider this anti-terrorism effort as a suitable activity and the state Adjutant General sees the value of such a mission supporting the goals of the military department, it becomes a suitable activity to undertake as a SDF project. The planning, organization, training and operational aspects are precisely what the SDF volunteer citizen soldier excels at.

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